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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 1839
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1831
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RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 0028
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SUBJECT: TAJIK BORDER POSTS STILL SUFFER FROM LAST YEAR'S FLOODING
AND LACK OF SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

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1. (SBU) Embassy Officers visited four border posts in the Moscovsky region bordering Afghanistan and saw how last year's severe flooding destroyed the units' buildings, seriously hindering the border guards' ability to protect the Tajik border from illicit activity. In addition to flood damage and years of wear and tear, the departing Russian border troops stripped the posts of critical equipment and supplies. In the winter, as in many rural areas of Tajikistan, electricity is scarce, only available one to two hours per day. Generators at the border posts are nothing more than Soviet-style hunks of metal, too inefficient to run given the price of fuel. Minefields installed by Russian troops remain active and pose a real threat to unsuspecting visitors and civilians. EmbOffs, guided by Colonel Kamolov, the State Border Protection Committee engineer responsible for designing architectural plans for construction of new buildings, surveyed the border posts. Post will recommend that outposts number 8 and 7 described below receive priority consideration for renovation/reconstruction using existing INL funding. The rest should be funded using DoD Counter-narcotics FY06 supplemental funding.

RIBHOZ, FISHFARM, #8

2. (SBU) In early 2005, floods from the Pyanj River ripped through the outpost and split it into two, destroying training facilities. The water left a bed of rocks about 500 yards wide in the middle of the post. The post evacuated staff and moved ammunition, but have since returned to the same location. Border guards report that Afghans crossed the border and periodically looted the facilities after the 2005 flood up until July 2006. Ribhoz currently has no functioning communications

system, however, through U.S. government funding, Post will be installing Harris radio communications system at the outpost.

13. (U) The Pyanj is known to flood frequently and each year the river's destruction takes its toll in property and lives. The Asian Development Bank is working with the government on an embankment reinforcement project in Moscovsky to prevent future flooding, but work is not yet complete.

14. (SBU) The State Border Protection Committee intends to move the post's location one to two kilometers further away from the river. Ribhoz is the name of border post number 8 in Moscovsky District, so named because of the area's former abundance of fish farms. Fish farming used to be profitable, but the supplies have since depleted and many large dried-out man-made lakes remain. It is in one of these lakes that the State Border Protection Committee intends to relocate the border post site.

SAYOD, HUNTER, #7

15. (SBU) The effects of the Pyanj floods is most striking at Sayod, number 7 of the Moscovsky posts. Little remains of the post, established at least twenty years ago. Prior to the flooding, Sayod had 12 buildings, now there are only four. The floods cause land erosion, which claimed 8 of the buildings, including warehouses and offices. Although the water flow has been diverted, land continues to erode away and threatens what's left of Sayod's property. The State Border Protection Committee wants to build a new post on nearby higher ground with a better view of the Afghan border and safe from the Pyanj.

16. (SBU) Sayod has a minimal communications system comprised of only Motorola radios. The post's commander reported the soldiers received Halal meals from U.S. assistance, but that many fell ill after eating what they commonly believe to be expired MREs. He claimed a doctor lab-tested them and deemed

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them unacceptable to eat. (Note: The border guards do not have a qualified lab technician to conduct tests and provided no evidence supporting their finding. Post is working to train and set up a proper forensics lab in Tajikistan.)

JAIROLI, PORCUPINE, #6 AND MUHOJOROBAD, LAND OF REFUGEES, #5

17. (SBU) The Jairoli #6 post and Muhojorobad #5 post face problems common to border posts throughout Tajikistan. Each post houses approximately 50 soldiers, but their dilapidated buildings and poor facilities make living conditions difficult. Jairoli is at least 25 years old and Muhojorobad's construction dates to the 1940s or 1950s. Both Jairoli and Muhojorobad could benefit from a water well and water pump. Tajikistan's rural water supply system has deteriorated since the Soviet times. Currently, Jairoli gets its water supply through a rudimentary pipe and water wheel operating on a stream that runs through the post's compound.

18. (SBU) Both posts need significant renovation. Areas of importance include establishing bathroom and shower facilities, constructing new roofs, renovating warehouses and repairing crumbling internal walls. Both posts currently have Motorola radios and also utilize an old ineffective cable telephone line. Building officers' quarters would boost morale at the posts. Currently officers live and work in their offices. With officers' quarters they could bring their families to live with them at post. That way, they would be able to remain on site longer throughout the year.

19. (SBU) State Border Protection Committee guides told EmbOffs Jairoli and Muhojorobad also received Halal meals, but we did not see any uniforms, boots, sleeping bags or other U.S. assistance.

110. (SBU) COMMENT: Post will reexamine and increase end-use monitoring of border guard assistance and devise an improved plan to directly provide INL assistance to the border posts

instead of routing it through the central government where bureaucracy and corruption can delay essential assistance. Post's Senior Law Enforcement Advisor has visited the site for follow-on assessments and will bring direct assistance during future site visits instead of relying on the State Border Protection Committee which has responded slowly to needs. In addition, post will consider providing food assistance in the forms of staples locally purchased instead of U.S. military Halal meals which Tajik soldiers do not favor.

¶11. (SBU) The devastation caused by flooding at the posts on the Afghan border shows the destructive potential of the river. In addition, the country's inadequate water delivery system is extremely evident at these border outposts. Water issues have a tremendous effect on the environment, health and economy. Here in Tajikistan, we also see the important role that water plays in security issues. The border posts need to be repaired or relocated with potential flooding hazards in mind if Tajikistan wants to continue to be successful in protecting its borders.

END COMMENT.
JACOBSON